



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PROJECT CEASEFIRE
**ONE MAN SENTENCED, ANOTHER PLEADS GUILTY
TO ILLEGAL FIREARM POSSESSION**

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that one Kansas City man was sentenced and another pleaded guilty in federal court today, in separate and unrelated cases, for illegal possession of firearms. Today's sentencing and guilty plea, Graves said, are part of Project Ceasefire, the district's ongoing anti-crime initiative.

* **Roy R. Thornton**, 32, of Kansas City, Mo., was sentenced by U.S. District Chief Judge Dean Whipple this afternoon to three years and one month in federal prison without parole.

On April 22, 2004, **Thornton** pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm. By pleading guilty, **Thornton** admitted that he was in possession of a Smith and Wesson .40-caliber pistol on Dec. 31, 2003. Under federal statutes, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of a firearm or ammunition. **Thornton** has three 1993 criminal felony convictions for assault on a law enforcement officer, armed criminal action and unlawful use of a weapon, a 1991 criminal felony conviction for felon possession of a controlled substance and a 1989 criminal felony conviction for felony stealing.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jess E. Michaelsen. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **Ezequiel J. Perez**, 36, of Kansas City, Mo., pleaded guilty before U.S. Magistrate Judge John T. Maughmer this afternoon to being a felon in possession of a firearm.

By pleading guilty, **Perez** admitted that he was in possession of an Armi Tanfoglio .25-caliber pistol on Aug. 12, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who

has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Perez** has a 1986 criminal felony conviction for manslaughter.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul S. Becker. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Project Ceasefire

Project Ceasefire, launched in October 1999, is a cooperative initiative by federal and local law enforcement and the Kansas City Crime Commission that targets for federal prosecution persons who unlawfully use or possess firearms.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow